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Nutritional Status of the Elderly With Respiratory Diseases and Their Association With the Diagnosis

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Respiratory tract diseases are among the main causes of morbidity and mortality in the elderly and often increase metabolic demand, with a negative impact on nutritional status (NS). **Objective:** To verify the NS of the elderly with respiratory diseases and their association with the diagnosis. **Methodology:** a retrospective study was carried out based on the collection of demographic, clinical and nutritional data from the records of elderly patients admitted with respiratory pathologies from February to July 2017 in the medical clinic. In the nutritional evaluation we considered: body mass index (BMI) classified according to Lipschitz (1994), the percentage of adequacy of arm circumference (AM) and calf circumference (CC). Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to verify normality and Pearson chi-square test to verify association between variables, with 95% confidence. The SPSS version 13.0 program was used. **Results and Discussion:** a sample of 24 elderly people, mean age of 74.56 ± 8.89 years, with 62.5% female. The common pathologies were respiratory tract infection (54.2%), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (20.8%), pulmonary tuberculosis (12.5%) and pneumonia (12.5%). 50% were malnourished according to BMI, the mean BMI being 22.9 ± 5.82 kg / m²; 66.7% according to the AM and 70.8% according to the CC. The prevalence of eutrophic and overweight by BMI was 29.2% and 20.8%, respectively; 20.8% were eutrophic for the AM and 12.5% were overweight and obese. There was no significant association between diagnosis and nutritional indicators ($p > 0.05$). Respiratory tract infections are the main causes of hospitalization in this population, corroborating the literature. The prevalence of malnutrition found may suggest that elderly people with nutritional depletion are responsible for the greater number of hospitalizations. **Conclusion:** there was a higher prevalence of malnutrition, demonstrating the need for early intervention in order to contribute to clinical improvement and avoid worsening of nutritional status.

Keywords: Nutrition Assessment; Respiratory Tract Diseases; Nutritional Status; Body Mass Index

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